On that day, November 6, Pskov was full of rumors. The newspapers announced that the Bolsheviks had taken the Fortress of Peter and Paul. The War Ministry wired that Kerensky had appeared before the Council of the Republic and asked for unconditional support of measures taken by the government to check Communist riots. According to the Ministry, the Council responded with an enthusiastic ovation. A couple of hours later, however, we learned the particulars of that session. The Council had replied to Kerensky's plea with a resolution demanding revision of foreign policy, distribution of land to the peasants, and convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the earliest possible date. After Kerensky rejected these demands, the Council broke off all relations with the government. It was perfectly clear that what Kerensky called the "measures taken by the government" existed only in his imagination. The only hope of the crumbling regime lay in troops from the front. There was a hope that some would respond to the call of the All-Russian Executive Committee, but it was clear that no soldiers would march on Kerensky's personal order.

Late in the evening, the Commander of the Petrograd Military District wired me: "The Bolsheviks are taking over public buildings and railroad stations, one after another. The troops refuse to execute orders. The military schools are giving up their arms without resistance. The Cossacks refuse to leave their barracks. The Provisional Government is in danger of being overthrown."

Time was running out. The Northern Front could do nothing without an appeal by the All-Russian Executive Committee. My task now was to get such an appeal. I summoned a telegrapher to the teletype in my office and began to call the members of the Committee's presiding board in Petrograd one after another. The telegrapher at the other end of the line could not find any of them. After an hour or more of futile calls, Gotz, one of the leaders of the Committee, appeared at the teletype. I told him, "The government is calling for troops, but no soldier will respond to its call. There is hope that an appeal of the All-Russian Executive Committee would be more effective. I am awaiting your instructions."

After midnight I received the answer. "The board of the All-Russian Executive Committee approves the call of troops from the front and authorizes you to act in its name."

At that time I did not know that the Executive Committee, like the Council of the Republic, had broken off relations with the government.